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1. Introduction

Interpersonal relationships are an essential part of our everyday life. They enable us to know who we are and to relate with each other. One needs to master the art of creating a healthy relationship with the world around us. It helps us to attain a real sense of belongingness. Relatedness and relationships are essential to men and women of all ages. Relationships give a sense of belongingness and justify human existence in the world. We face significant changes in the world today. It is true that a colourful fabric of many religions, cultures, languages and schools of thoughts add beauty to our being in the world. On the other hand, contemporary dimensions of life such as economic globalization and its effects on society, individual style as human exists for himself, abuse of dialogue paving the way to fundamentalism, dictatorships and negative forms of nationalism challenge the fundamental rights of existence in the world and interpersonal relationships. The complex nature of interpersonal relationships influenced by social, cultural and other influences need to be interrogated to find out the space between interpersonal relationships. People seek an optimal distance from others that becomes closer with friends and distant with individuals who do not expect to interact.

This research attempts to examine interpersonal relationships in the select novels of Malamud from metaxological perspective. It focuses on how individuals form a community where there is agapeic service and transformation in individuals. It explores how metaxological perspectives give due importance to the self and other in the formation of community. It attempts to bring out the relevance of metaxological relationships which give importance to dialogue, ethical relationships and love. It is essential to understand the space between interpersonal relationships to lead a meaningful life in the contemporary world.

2. Background of the Study

The concept of self and the other helps philosophers to understand human existence. Martin Buber criticizes the prominence given to an individual by Soren Kierkegaard with an argument that we can speak about ourselves only in relation to others. Immanuel Levinas elaborates this argument stating that every individual has to be responsible for the other and goes to the extent of denying oneself for the other. The concept of the other, proposed by philosophers, either distances one from the other as a threat or asks to move out of self-contentment to responsibility in which self is no longer responsible for oneself but for the other. It either throws away one's subjectivity or makes one self-oriented. This problem of overemphasizing either the 'self' or the 'other' looks for a space which affirms the 'self' and the 'other'.

The theory of metaxology proposed by William Desmond tries to understand the drawbacks of dualism and the emphasis given to extremes and to bring a space that embraces plurality. The theory of in-between may help to understand interpersonal relationships. This research investigates the importance of interpersonal relationships in the select novels of Bernard Malamud and explores a space which affirms the individual 'self' and the 'other'. It examines interpersonal relationships in the context of the Jewish experience in America. The analysis focuses on the novelist's understanding and imagination he uses in his writings. It interrogates the experience of the Jewish community, which considers interpersonal relationships as an essential element in their lives. An attempt is made to understand the space between interpersonal relationships from the philosophical perspective of metaxology proposed by William Desmond. It critically analyses the theories of Martin Buber and Immanuel Levinas to establish the importance of metaxology propounded by William Desmond. The analysis of the select novels of Bernard Malamud may help to understand a

unique way of perceiving interpersonal relationships which solves many conflicts in interpersonal relationships.

It is essential to understand how metaxology is different from the interpersonal relationship described by other philosophers. Buber considers acceptance of 'other' by 'self' as the beginning of every relationship (*The Knowledge of Man* 181). The desire to be accepted is one of the basic instincts present in every human being. In order to accept the 'other', one has to go through a process of distancing. Distancing is implied in acceptance as the 'self' distinguishes its difference from the other. One has to accept oneself as well as the 'other', and mutual recognition leads to the interpersonal relationship through dialogue (79). This relationship enables us to understand the uniqueness of the 'self' and the qualities of the 'other' (Mundackal 118). This relationship between the 'self' and the 'other' becomes the basis for a society. The common bond existing between different people forms a community. Desmond goes one step ahead to state that a community is built when an individual transcends towards the other. He also states that the concept of a community is self-generated. The mode of the community that Desmond visualizes should give oneself to the other without expecting anything (*William Desmond Reader* 42). The community provides freedom to the individual beyond self-determination.

According to Buber, the relationship between 'I 'and 'Thou' are immediate, which affirms the absence of a third person (*I and Thou* 62). Knowledge or imagination cannot find any role between this interpersonal relationship. Even though there is a difference in the intensity of the interpersonal relationship, it is reciprocal. As a result, it becomes mutual and gradually leads to inclusion. It goes to the extent where the other has to feel the importance of the self. This sort of relationship happens when one goes to the other to reach and accompany it (*Between Man and Man* 39). Contrary to the argument of Buber, Desmond establishes a space between interpersonal relationship which enables one to transcend towards the other.

This space is a transcending space which makes movement beyond the space possible (*The William Desmond Reader* 199). Between is a place which is always open and welcomes everyone to that place. Middle is a place where the 'self' and the 'other' meet and start their communication.

There are differences among philosophers as to how they relate the concept of time to interpersonal relationship. Buber proposes the idea of time in the interpersonal relationship, and names it as actuality and latency. He relates actuality and latency with I-Thou and I-It relationship. The interpersonal relationship oscillates between actuality and latency. Buber states that the period of I-Thou relationship is short, while the I-It period is considered as the potency to move towards the actuality (*I and Thou* 98-99). On the contrary, the metaxological relationship is beyond any time limit (*The William Desmond Reader* 58). In the metaxological relation, individuals have sufficient time to wait and establish a relationship.

According to Buber, 'I-Thou' relationship is dialogical and 'I-It' relationship is monological (Stevenson 194). Everyone has an equal possibility to enter into dialogue. Buber gives a spiritual dimension to the 'I-Thou' relationship and states that it is possible only through grace. 'I-Thou' relationship can be considered as a fulfilment of a mystery (Anderson 103). One of the reasons for failing to establish the 'I-Thou' relationship is the lack of dialogue. Buber states that technical dialogue is for creating knowledge, and it does not help to establish an interpersonal relationship. Speech is considered as a medium of confrontation between two individuals. Marcel also argues that dialogue is necessary to confirm the presence of 'self' in the interpersonal relationship. According to Marcel, communication is an essential element of interpersonal relationship along with self-revelation. Self-revelations enable a person to get transformed into the spiritual realm. Levinas also states that a dialogue is necessary to form a relationship between the 'Self' and the 'Other'. Dialogue helps a person to enter into a relationship wherein previous knowledge

is not necessary. The conversation depends upon the individual relationship which is unique in each relationship. Levinas states that the beginning of the interpersonal relationship is through dialogue. Desmond claims that communication makes the relationship between the 'self' and the 'other' possible. The conversation has the power to go beyond the 'self' and reach the 'other'. Desmond differentiates the communication between the 'self' and the 'other'. Self-communication will not allow entry into an interpersonal relationship. Communication enables self to transcend towards the other. It is communication which helps to form communities.

According to Buber, 'I-Thou' relationship leads to communion (*I and Thou* 4,6). The presence of 'Thou' is necessary to establish the existence of 'I'. Similarly, the presence of 'I' is required to affirm the presence of 'Thou'. The world of 'It' creates the world of individuals. It is necessary to develop a relationship either in the form of 'I-Thou' or in the form of 'I-It'. Similarly, Marcel also affirms that the presence of the 'Other' is necessary to establish the presence of the 'Self'. The 'Other' enables the 'Self' to become self-sufficient (*Being and Having* 238). One has to give oneself to the 'Other' which is a way to attain self-fulfilment and communion. Marcel also states that fidelity and hope are two essential elements in achieving communion (Miceli 111). Marcel claims that communion is a higher level of relationship, and one can attain this communion through self-donation (120). It is self-revelation, which leads to communion. The aim of relationship and the highest form of relationship is communion. Fidelity and hope are the results of this communion, and there will also be a temptation to fall back to selfishness. It is hope which takes a human being to the transcendental realm (*Being and Having* 80). It is hope which helps a person to overcome suffering in life and attain liberation. Love plays a vital role in bringing communion in a community. According to Desmond, it is communication which forms a community. According to him, "The community is the Metaxological togetherness of pluralism of voices,

where no one's voice shouts down the other voices or reduces them to itself" (Being and the Between 434). The ideal form of a community is the community of agapeic service, and it is self-transcending and opening towards the whole community. Metaxological communities are gifted with the 'between' which is a free place and attract everyone to that place. It enables the participants to transcend towards the 'other'.

'I-Thou' relationship takes place in three different spheres such as nature, spiritual and the realm of human beings. 'I-Thou' relationship takes place with nature when one transforms nature into a living reality (*I and Thou* 150). Buber states that plants and animals have the potency to communicate and enter into a relationship. Language is not an essential element to establish a relationship with spiritual beings. Marcel opines that the interpersonal relationship lifts the people who are involved in this relationship to the spiritual realm and turns it into a moral commitment. According to Levinas, animals and plants also can enter into interpersonal relationship through participation (*Collected Philosophical Papers* 6). Desmond speaks about the transformation of the self, both internally and externally.

It is the face of the other which evokes responsibility in other beings. Levinas terms it as a radical responsibility, which makes a person to become responsible even for the mistakes of the 'Other'. The self is responsible for the frailties of the 'Other' (*Alterity and Transcendence* 111). The 'Self' has to give itself entirely to the other to establish a proper relationship. Levinas illustrates that one has to sacrifice oneself for the 'Other' to initiate an interpersonal relationship (*Other than Being or Beyond Essence* 103). The interpersonal relationship enables the 'self' to transcend towards the 'Other'. The transcendence of one being to the other being should not destroy any being but should enable to illumine each other (Other Than Being or Beyond Essence 3-4). Desmond's thoughts are slightly different from Levinas, where he says that metaxological relationship enables to understand the mistakes of the 'other' and enables to form an interpersonal relationship. Desmond also states

that the love towards the other is self-sacrificing and at the same time, it affirms itself. This research attempts to understand the interpersonal relationships in the novels of Malamud.

3. Research Problem

The interpersonal relationships which give due importance to both the 'self' and the 'other' is yet to be closely studied in the novels of Bernard Malamud to form an agapeic community which results in agapeic service. This research interrogates the interpersonal relationships portrayed in the novels of Bernard Malamud from a metaxological perspective which affirms both the 'self' and the 'other' to form an agapeic community resulting in agapeic service. The interpersonal relationships are analysed from the context of Jewish culture especially in relation to their displacement. It interrogates the experience of the Jewish community in the context of America and Russia. It aims to establish a space between interpersonal relationship which helps to form a community. This study is significant since it helps to understand the interpersonal relationships in the present context and to build a community which gives primary importance to service. The research understands the cultural context of the Jews who migrated into America and Russia in the twentieth century, the struggles they faced to relate with people of different culture and establish themselves and form a community.

4. Research Questions

This study provides an opportunity to explore the interpersonal relationships broadly related to American Jewish culture. The existing studies do not explore the idea of extending one's freedom nor the freedom of others. It proves that the interpretations are not convincing enough as claimed by Malamud, "I am in defence of the human", and his purpose of keeping the civilization from destroying itself. An analysis of the characters in the select novels of Bernard Malamud through metaxology will enable us to understand the relationships which lead to self-redemption. This study aims to address the following questions:

- How are interpersonal relationships portrayed in the novels of Bernard Malamud?
- What is the nature of interpersonal relationships in Malamud's writings?
- How do interpersonal relationships abolish the dualism between the self and the other?
- Do interpersonal relationships transform characters?
- What is the relevance of portraying such interpersonal relationships in today's context?

5. Objectives of the Study

This study examines the interpersonal relationships portrayed in the novels of Malamud from metaxological perspective. It is an attempt to bring out the significance of the space between interpersonal relationship which is rooted in dialogue, ethical relationships and agapeic love. It explores to ascertain whether human beings attain fulfilment in community through transformation. The spaces between interpersonal relationships include the daily lives of people involved in the movement and participation of people in socioeconomic activities which are regulated by the cultural mores of the people. The way how the novelist visualizes the interpersonal relationships at different points of time need to be explored to understand the significance of the space between the interpersonal relationships. The proposed study reveals the method adopted by the novelist to narrate the space between the interpersonal relationships. Interrogating the cultural space is necessary to understand the ideologies that shape these interpersonal relationships. This study throws light on different forms of relationships and tries to explore to ascertain whether human existence attains its fulfilment through metaxological relationships. It also attempts to explore the reasons for transformation in the characters of Malamud. It examines the characteristics of the space between interpersonal relationships which lead to a community.

6. Thesis Statement

The interpersonal relationships portrayed in the novels of Bernard Malamud are metaxological because it affirms the self and transcends towards the other and forms a community where there is agapeic love and service.

7. Significance of the Study

This thesis addresses the issues that are relevant to the novelist in the context of Jewish identity. This thesis assumes that this study is essential since the study informs us about the interpersonal relationships which are very relevant in today's context. The researcher is encouraged to investigate the space between interpersonal relationships, which results in agapeic love and agapeic community, which remains unexplored in the novels of Bernard Malamud. Thus, it is hoped that a thesis of this nature would not only contribute to the understanding of interpersonal relationships in the Jewish context but would also help to identify the problems in the communities and suggest a solution to it.

8. Primary Texts

Bernard Malamud was the eldest son of Russian Jewish migrants Max Malamud and Bertha Fidelman. He was born on April 26, 1914, in Brooklyn, New York. His parents had a grocery shop in Brooklyn, where few Jews lived (Shuman 910). Malamud had his early education in Brooklyn and graduated from Manhattan Public College (911). Malamud married Ann de Chiara in 1945 and had a son, Paul and a daughter, Janna (911). He tried to support himself during his studies and decided to become an author. He published his first novel in 1952. Malamud earned many awards for his book *The Assistant,* such as National Institute of Arts and Letters, Daroff Memorial Fiction Award and Rosenthal Foundation Award (912). The novel *The Assistant* is translated into many other languages. *The Magic Barrel,* his collection

of thirteen short stories won the National Book Award and Foundation Fellowship Award. Malamud won Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award for his fiction *The Fixer* in 1967 (914). He links fact and fantasy to address human problems and moral responsibility (909). He has written five short story collections and seven novels during his lifetime. In 1986, on March 18, he died of a heart attack (914).

Malamud used Jews to illustrate the universal human condition (915). Malamud considered Jew as a symbol of suffering and fate of human beings. American Jews are the main characters in his novels, who are mainly workers or small shopkeepers (917). He has also selected Italian characters in his books based on the inspiration of his observations. Malamud has given priority to the universal experience of characters in his novels. Social and personal responsibilities are the main themes of his novels, which are recognised through suffering. World War II and Adolf Hitler were the two reasons which inspired him to write about Jewish history (917).

Malamud portrays some of the basic issues of the Jews, Jewish history, their culture and religion in his novels. The novelist presents a unique milieu of the Jewish experience in America and their perceptions of the challenging world. His books include *The Natural* (1952), *The Fixer* (1966), *The Assistant* (1957), *The Tenants* (1971), *God's Grace* (1982), *A New Life* (1961), *Pictures of Fidelman* (1969), *Dubin's Life* (1979) and a collection of short stories – *The Magic Barrel* (1958). Though the fictional works of Malamud predominantly deal with the barrenness of familial relationship, the existential themes of the individual isolation, struggle for independence and identity as well as lack of meaningful communication among people living together and treatment of interpersonal relationships are diverse and unique in each novel. Mainly, his four widely acclaimed novels – *The Assistant*, *A New Life*, *The Fixer* and *The Tenants* reflect the basic principles of human relationships such as love and compassion. In his concern for individual relationships, Malamud's novels

have raised the existential issues such as from detachment to attachment, quest for a new life, isolation of an individual, unselfish love for humanity, and freedom and commitment. While the novel, *The New Life,* discusses the nature of interpersonal relationships in the academic life, *The Fixer* represents the protagonist confronting selfishness, cowardice, opportunism and hypocrisy. *The Fixer*, which is set in pre-revolutionary Russia, discusses the political aspects involved in interpersonal relationships, whereas the novel, *The Tenants,* represents the conflict between art and life and how the interpersonal relationships are fostered among artists. *The Assistant,* on the contrary, explores the possibility of interpersonal relationships in the context of migration. Thus, the different layers of interpersonal relationships are interrogated by the novelist providing a space between people and eliminating duality.

The life of the protagonist of the novel *The Assistant* is a journey in search of identity. It speaks about the challenges of an individual in a new place. His life goes through a confrontation in the new environment while establishing a proper relationship with other individuals and society. Frank Alpine came to America in search of job. He looked for a vacancy in many places, but nobody paid him any attention. Morris Bober offered him an opportunity even though it was not affordable for him to have an assistant. The business improved in the shop due to Alpine's presence but Ida, the wife of Bober, did not want Alpine to work in the shop because he was a Christian and her daughter, Helen, might fall in love with him. Helen and Alpine started spending time together and sharing about their dreams. Very soon, she realized that Alpine was similar to her former boyfriend and she stopped interacting with him. There were two occasions when Alpine saved Bober from danger, and when he died, Alpine took charge of the shop, helped Helen's education, got circumcised and became a Jew. The nature of the relationships is analysed to understand the transformation of the characters of the novel and to know how they affirm themselves.

The protagonist of *The New Life* wants to break through the bitter experience of the past for a better opportunity in life. It tells the story of a search for authenticity in a social and emotional level. It is a search for man's selfhood in a world of isolation. Seymour Levin, who went through poverty in his childhood, comes to Cascadia campus in search of a better future. It was tough for Levin to live his life alone in the college and the attempts he made to establish the relationship became a failure. His involvement in politics in the campus made his life uncertain when he was about to lose his job. Levin fell in love with Pauline, the wife of Gilley who was dissatisfied with her life. Gilley considered his wife and their children as a burden due to their health issues and related financial problems. Levin's relationship with Pauline redeemed her from her suffering, and the journey affirmed his life. This research attempts to find the metaxological elements in the life of these characters.

The Fixer tells the story of a Jew who suffers because he is a Jew. The suffering and pain of the protagonist become a medium to establish his existence. The protagonist of the novel, Yakov Bok, who went through terrible confinement in his life was a search for the meaning of suffering. He went from shtetl to Kiev in search of a better opportunity and was offered a job when he helped Nikolai Maximovitch from an accident. He stayed in a place which was prohibited for Jews and was accused of killing a Christian child, Zhenia Golov. The investigating officers knew that Yakov was innocent, and that made his suffering severe. Yakov did not get fair treatment in prison. There was an attempt to poison him, and at the same time, they were ready to release him if he accepted the crime. He did not want to come out of prison as a pardoned criminal. The only hope he had was that he would be able to prove his innocence in the trial. This research analyses the transformation that happened in his life through suffering and the change in the characters through interpersonal relationships.

The Tenants narrates the story of two writers – Harry Lesser and Willie Spearmint. Lesser was staying in an old building which was about to be demolished for new construction. He was about to complete the third novel, which he was writing for the last ten years. His stay in the building was not comfortable due to lack of basic facilities yet he considered it was necessary to stay in the same building to complete his novel. Willie, who had gone through a terrible experience in his childhood because he was 'black' and poor, appeared in the building. He was also engaged in writing due to which he was not ready to share his personal details with Lesser. The relationship between them brought a change in their characters. This research tries to understand the nature of the relationship, which is transforming and affirming.

9. Review of Literature

The novelist reflects on the issues related to society, of which, he has first-hand knowledge. Consequently, it is evident in the fictional writings that the writer yearns to create a space through imagination. Critical responses to Malamud are classified into cultural, religious, linguistic and literary. The themes of his novels vary as rightly pointed out by P.K. Suleiha in his thesis, "Humanism in the Novels of Bernard Malamud". Malamud addresses the various issues such as human sufferings, identity and responsibility (2). Malamud's efforts are to attain greater freedom than what a man was born with. He emphasizes the idea of one's freedom and that of the other. His writing goes well with the Jewish experience in America.

The Jews who were migrated into America gave prior importance to their community. Joseph H Lookstein, in the article, "Traditional Judaism in America", describes the settlement and the increase in the number of Jews in America and the elation and depression in Judaism. "It was their religious-social needs that impelled them to join together" (328). The Jews gave prior importance to integrity and responsibility towards the house of God. There was a

complete change in the structure and nature of the Jewish community. “The community was concerned about the interpersonal relationships among the Jews” (328). The analysis of the history points to the fact that the Jewish community has given more importance to interpersonal relationships.

Interaction with American culture and people enabled migrated Jews to assimilate their practices and they also responded to the differences. Hugh H Smythe and Jerry J Pine in the article, “The Jews in America since World War II”, examine the obstacles faced by the Jews in America. “They brought with them a religion and culture that was out of place in America” (70). Gradually, the Jews began to drop out of their ties with religion and went their own way towards assimilation. “The Jews left their synagogues increasingly and often, seemed to be discarding their religious ties more than any other religious groups” (66). The article, “The encounter between the Jews and America in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era”, analyses the contribution of Jews to America and the response of the Americans towards it which makes the existence of Jews in the United States unique. It explains how Immigration, Race and Colour, the American Economy, Religion and Politics provided the soil for establishing a very particular Jewish community (10). The period between 1870 and 1920 was characterized by a mass migration of the Jews to the United States. There were Jewish campaigns against classroom prayers, Sunday closing laws, and mandatory reading of the Bible. The Jewish communal leaders began campaigning against the aspects of the American Society. These articles try to understand the factors which influence interpersonal relationships between the Americans and the Jews.

Jews who carried their experiences of the past responded positively and adapted to the new culture with changes in their attitudes. Marc Lee Raphael in the book, *Judaism in America,* describes the late nineteenth century and the twentieth-century history of Judaism in America. It focuses on the importance of enlightenment and how all modern Judaism

emerged as a response to it. Another chapter in the same book written by Riv Ellen Prell titled, “Triumph, Accommodation and Resistance, American Jewish life from the end of World War II to the Six Day War”, describes the migration of Jews who survived the Holocaust to the United States between 1933 and 1950. It examines the challenges they faced in America.

The influence of reform bridged the gap between all people, as explained by Solomon B Freehof in the article, “Reform Judaism in America”. It speaks about the conscious adjustment in cultural, political and social conditions of the new age. The article emphasizes that “Reform Judaism tried to sweep away the sense of exile” (359). It attacked the old rabbinic authority. Frederic Cople Jaher, in the article, "Conflict between Jews and Christians and within the Jewish Community in America", analyses how the Jews tried to attain total acceptance. They sought for government neutrality towards all sects and worked for the separation of religion and the state.

The experience of the migrated Jews was entirely different in Russia. In the article “Visualising Pogroms in Russian History”, Robert Weinberg explains how the Jewish minority was persecuted for imagined crimes (Weinberg 71). The pogroms happened in the country because of social, political and economic reasons and the Jews became the scapegoats. The participation of Police and soldiers and their indifference towards the persecution made it worse (72). Economic and social resentment led anti-Semitic emotions to violence. One of the major accusations against Jews was the accusation of the murder of a Christian youth (75). Even the non-Jewish people became victims of violence due to which they would, sometimes, carry religious symbols to escape from persecution (76). The crucial driving forces behind the pogrom were economic grievances and religious feelings (78). The book *Ritual Murder in Russia, Eastern Europe and Beyond: New Histories of an Old Accusation* narrates how Jews became victims of Christian accusation (Avrutin, Dekel-Chen,

and Weinberg 2). Hundreds of Jews were tortured and executed for murdering and using the blood of Christian children for making matzo (2). A study made by the experts could not find any proof to validate the accusation against the Jews.

Jews were forced to move out of Russia since they were considered as responsible for all the problems existing in Russia. In the article "Russian Anti-Semitism and Scapegoating of Jews", James L Gibson and Mark Morje Howard narrate the turmoil against Jews in Russia. According to the article, the Russians found Jews as responsible for their economic and social distress (Gibson, Morje 193). The scapegoat theory is based on finding an innocent or a weak group as responsible for the violence or tension. It was considered that the primary source of the existence of evil in the country was Jews (194). Jews have been a target in the history of Russia. Due to the social condition, people have been looking for a reason behind these problems and it was directed towards an innocent or minority group (196). The intention was to force all the Jews to move out of Russia. These articles help to understand the context of Malamud's writing specifically focusing on the context in America and Russia.

Malamud shows his human concern by depicting the experience of the migrated Jews in his novels. The article, "Experiments in Theme and Form: Five Malamud Apprenticeship Stories", by Edward A Abramson discusses how Malamud's early life influenced his writings. Abramson quotes Malamud's own words and says that it is his parents who taught him the values of human beings and they lived a 'person-centred world'. The main themes of Malamud's earlier stories were human understanding and compassion (49). He also portrays a lack of compassion and selflessness in his stories. Malamud's great concern is to be humane, which is reflected in his writings. In this article, Abramson shows how Malamud's writing is closely related to his early childhood experience as a Jew.

Early childhood experience of Malamud as a migrated Jew is portrayed in his writings. Eileen H Watts, in the article, “Jewish Self-Hatred in Malamud's *The Jewbird*”, examines the fate of the Jews who are scattered in different countries. She argues that self-hatred is forced by a dominant group who demands that they abandon their differences and become one like them (4). The bird in the story represents self-hatred and failure of a Jew. The analysis of the story gives the conclusion that whoever kills a Jew is killing human being itself. This article represents the attitude towards Jews and how Malamud understood the scenario.

Malamud gives importance to human values through the representation of Jewish experiences. The article, “Humanism with and without Tears: Malamud's Grace”, by Richard Gilman analyses the human struggle narrated in the novels of Bernard Malamud. Malamud was known for his understanding and compassion towards ordinary man (40). Gilman quotes Malamud's own words, which says that if people do not respect human being, they cannot enjoy Malamud's work because he is in defence of the human. Malamud used the word human repeatedly in his speeches and interviews to affirm that he stands for human values. This article helps the reader to understand the priority given by Malamud for human beings and interpersonal relationships.

The alienated self is the central theme of the article, “Surrealism and the Struggle for Identity in *The Fixer*”, by Arvindra Sant. The protagonist of the novel, Yakov Bok, is depicted as the alienated self, which is cut off from society and itself. The prison in the novel represents psychological constraints and the freedom of the other. The protagonist tries to escape from the situation, but he is imprisoned, and his identity is taken away from him (179). The isolation and imprisonment strengthened him with a courage to stand against his oppressors. He fought for dignity and identity. This article examines the ways through which

the protagonist overcame alienation and shows that interpersonal relationship is one among them.

Jews tried to establish their identity in the migrated land. The Thesis, “Grace under Pressure in the Novels of Bernard Malamud”, by R. Jothipaul analyses various themes in the novels of Bernard Malamud such as concern for family, individual isolation and relationship with the community. It aims to prove the presence of individual isolation and struggle for independence and identity in Bernard Malamud's novels. It emphasizes self-exploration and the desire for self-discovery in the novels of Bernard Malamud. This study helps to understand the possibility of the struggle to win freedom for oneself and the other.

Malamud gives importance to love and compassion. Bonnie Lyons, in the article, “The Contrasting Visions of Malamud and O'Connor”, compares strengths, limitations and narrative strategies of Malamud and O'Connor. Both the writers have a moral purpose, and their writings affect a reader's consciousness (79). According to Lyons, Malamud gives prior importance in recognizing humanity towards others. Lyons opines that Malamud writes like a fellow member of the human community, which can create understanding and sympathy in society (81). The human elements such as love and compassion reflected in the writings of Bernard Malamud focus on the interpersonal relationships which affirm oneself and the other.

Interpersonal relationships play a prominent role in Malamud’s writings. Gabriella Morisco, in the article, “Bernard Malamud: An American Reading of Fedor Dostoevsky”, explains guilt and meeting as the two central themes in the writings of Bernard Malamud. According to Bakhtin, the meeting represents space and time (15). Meeting the other becomes a necessity in the novel, *The Assistant.* Interpersonal relationship rescues the hero from a tragic situation. The novel portrays the value of existence as suffering and it is

explained through a direct relationship with the other (21). This article affirms the presence of interpersonal relationship as a key theme in the novels of Bernard Malamud.

Malamud tries to universalize the Jewish experience in his writing. Edward A Abramson in the article, “Bernard Malamud and the Jews: An Ambiguous Relationship”, analyses Malamud's writings and the way how he represents characters and situations which are related to Jewish rituals, history and the issues they confronted (146). Abramson argues that Malamud degrades the human condition by universalizing the Jews, Jewish culture and their history. The novel, *The Assistant*, represents Jewish practices, rituals and prayers in the form of decency and morality. Malamud has used Jewish content to show a larger concern to humanity (155). This article shows the relationship between the Jewishness of the first generation and second-generation Americans represented in Malamud’s novels and humanity.

One of the main focuses of the migrated Jews was to establish their identity. J P Steed, in the article, “The Spirit in all Things: The Search for Identity in Malamud's Angel Levine,” examines the theme of identity in the novels of Bernard Malamud. The question of identity is a common theme in the writings of many American Jewish authors (11). According to Steed, a lack of self-knowledge leads to the absence of identity. The protagonist of the story, Manischewitz, was in search of an angel who appeared in his room and found it at the end of the story. The search for the angel is considered as a search for his own identity and finally, he discovers himself and the angel as Jews. This article gives the basis for research since the protagonist finds his own identity in relation to the other.

Transformation is a key theme in the novels of Malamud. The article, “Women in the Fictions of Bernard Malamud: Springboards for Male Self-Transformation”, by Tim Parrish examines the role of women characters in the novels of Bernard Malamud. Helen is one of

the characters in the novels of Bernard Malamud, who becomes an agent of transformation in the life of Frank. Helen was the reason behind the conversion of Frank to a Jew (112). This article shows the role of interpersonal relationship in the transformation of people. The existing studies reveal that Malamud gives major importance to interpersonal relationships and identity. There are also studies which speak about the transformation of characters but they fail to draw connections between identity, interpersonal relationships and community. It can be better explained with the help of philosophical understanding of the theory of Metaxology proposed by William Desmond.

Through this study, the researcher hopes to trace the space between the interpersonal relationships, which affirms the existence of oneself and the other that the philosophers have attempted to portray. The study shall be supplemented with a philosophical concept of metaxology by William Desmond represented in the books – *Being and the Between* (1995), *God and the Between* (2008) and *The Intimate Strangeness of Being* (2012). The article, "The Theatre of Metaxu: Staging the Between", analyses the metaxological space in theatre by analysing different elements of theatre. This article is based on the metaxological perspective developed by William Desmond. The strength of this argument is based on its use of the theoretical framework and the ability to establish the reality as in between the extremes. It analyses the space of the stage, the intermediation of interaction, the shaping of the plot, the openness of endings, the tragic and the comic, the sacred and the profane (Desmond 113). The focus of this article is to find out space in-between. This article is relevant to my research as it gives a framework for the researcher to find out the space between relationships in the select novels of Bernard Malamud.

Brian John Martine in the article, "William Desmond, the Artwork, and a 'Metaxological' Understanding of Otherness", examines the art of making a property which allows distinguishing art from non-art. This article is effective in analysing the human

experience as in the middle. It questions the fundamental philosophical relations which emphasize the extremes such as beginning and end, opening and closure, origin and teloi. He challenges these fundamental relations and brings out space in between which embraces the plurality (Martin 335-336). It gives a strong foundation to understand the relationship between art and non-art. This article is important as the method can be used to analyse and interpret various relationships in the novels of Bernard Malamud.

The above-mentioned studies help to understand how the novels of Malamud represent the real experience of the migrant Jews and the importance he gives to human values. Scholars focus on the importance he has given to humanity and attempt to understand the key concepts such as identity, interpersonal relationships and transformation but they fail to focus on the key elements which connect these major concepts. It also examines the relevance of understanding interpersonal relationships by giving due importance to the self as well as the other to form a community. Thus, these novels focus on the nature of interpersonal relationships where there is a space in between the interpersonal relationships which go along with the theory of metaxology proposed by William Desmond.

10. Research Gap

The main focus of the available studies and critical analysis are on aspects such as Malamud's concern for humanity, the fate of the Jews, Jewish alienation and Jewish identity. There are no attempts to understand the interpersonal relationships portrayed in the novels through metaxology which results in transformation of characters. The review of literature clearly shows that there is a relation between, how history represents the presence of Jews in America and Russia and the literary representations of Malamud. A very few scholars have tried to study the interpersonal relationships portrayed in the novels of Malamud giving priority to philosophical understanding of Jewish identity and existence in the select novels

which is the main focus of Malamud. The existing studies clearly state that Malamud's characters attempt to establish their identity. Malamud also gives importance to themes such as relationships and transformation but there are no attempts to relate identity and relationships which lead to transformation. This research attempts to examine the relation between identity, interpersonal relationships and transformation through metaxology.

11. Methodology

The theoretical framework of this thesis is metaxology. It is a key term of William Desmond's philosophy. The term metaxology is derived from the Greek 'metaxu,' which means middle, intermediate, between, and 'logos' means discourse speech, articulate. Thus, metaxological means a discourse of the between. The between exists very much in experience that is reflected in one's living conditions. It denies the duality of existence such as I and you and takes the position of between. He denies the univocal way of existence that leads to determination. It is an engagement in being good and beautiful and absolute being, which means, ethics and aesthetics play an important role in affirming metaxological space. It creates a community in which there is an open dialectic between goodness, beauty and absolute being on the other side. A comparative study of William Desmond and Bernard Malamud helps to explore the real space between interpersonal relationships. It is an attempt to preserve the integrity of genuine otherness. It eradicates the emphasis given to the 'self' and 'other' and suggests a place which lies in between them which is known as metaxology. It is a free space between the self and the other which welcomes everything. It defends the plurality of beings. It asks one to give due importance to oneself as well as to the other. This mode of approach makes the theme of Malamud universal and relevant in our time.

William Desmond was born and brought up in Ireland and went to the US for his Ph.D., where he came across a very different experience. The different experience he

underwent in Ireland and America enabled him to think about the Hegelian idea of unity and wholeness. The different experience of the two countries provided him the existential background for "being between" (*The William Desmond Reader* 229). His contemporaries considered atheism as the default position. According to Desmond, to study Hegel, one has to be a Marxist. Desmond critiques Levinas and Heidegger and states that "Heidegger gives us being without the good, and Levinas gives us the good without being" (239). He states that what is required is both the being and the good which are the two senses of 'meta' that is 'in the midst' and 'beyond' to form the between.

Desmond is well known for his original contribution towards philosophy. He proposes a metaphysics which is very close to the experiential basis (vii). Desmond proposes a philosophy called metaxology, which means "between" and is a contrast to the idea of dialectical mediation of Hegel. This between keeps a way to maintain the difference. It maintains the distance between the same and the different and occupies the open space in between them. The specialty of this space is that it allows the difference and maintains the relationship between two individuals. Metaxological thinking preserves concreteness, distance and difference in beings (viii). Desmond is not a materialist and stands loyal to the concrete experiential things. By doing so, he represents a different voice. According to William Desmond, the relation is possible only when otherness is established and otherness is possible only with relation (xiv).

Desmond suggests fourfold ways such as the univocal, the equivocal, the dialectical and the Metaxological way to understand the being (3). The univocal sense of being stresses on sameness and unity of mind and being. The equivocal understanding of beings highlights the difference between being and mind. (3). The dialectical stresses on the mediation of the mind and being. The fourth way is metaxology, which gives more importance to the pluralized mediation. It gives priority to intermediation than self-mediation. This mediation

happens through different mediation in which mind, being, self and the other are involved. Metaxological space always keeps the space open for otherness, and tries to overcome the limitations of dialectical determination.

According to Plato, a human being is neither a god nor a beast, but someone in between. Even the definition of Philosophy is not completely wise and completely ignorant (9). Metaphysics is not the deduction of logical principles; instead, it is the unfolding of being. It is not the deduction of any abstract principle or complete generalization. It takes into consideration the particularities of the beings and how it is manifested. It is essential to question the relation between same and different, self and other and mind and being. According to William Desmond, there is no absolute certitude or absolute knowledge in the Hegelian concepts.

The major question of metaphysics is 'what is being'. Even though it is an old question, it must be asked again and again to renew it. The question about being is a metaphysical question, and it requires mindfulness to answer it. Its perplexity arouses tireless mindfulness requiring to ask this question very often for human beings to solve it. The answer to the question emerges from the depth of others (16). Metaphysical thinking is located amid beings. The position of human beings is in the middle. The perplexing nature of human beings shows that they are away from the truth that they seek. The perplexity of human beings shows that they are in between, between not-knowing and knowing, between ignorance and knowledge.

12. Method

This research adopts textual analysis to examine the novels and to identify space between interpersonal relationships in the novels of Bernard Malamud. It focuses on the language and the representation of the Jewish culture by the author to understand the representation of the

space. It examines the social and historical context in which the novels were written to understand the contextual meaning of the language. It also analyses the background of the author to understand his works. It is an attempt to discover something new from the cultural perspective but will not be able to cover all possible dimensions of the text (Belsey 166). It also examines the questions posed by the text and tries to answer them from multiple points of view (171). It gathers information to understand how people understand the world around them (Mckee 1). It is a process to understand how various cultures fit into the world through data collection (1). It is essential to understand the social context of the text to understand what the author wants to communicate with the reader. (Allen 3).

13. Chapter Division

13. 1. Chapter One: Introduction

The first chapter of this research introduces the author, the primary texts, the method, the methodology, objectives, research questions, scope, limitations and the significance of this research. It explains the significance of the study since it is closely related to everyday life. It brings various approaches about the self and explains why it is important to understand the relationship between 'self' and 'other' from a metaxological perspective. It gives a brief description about the author and the plot of the novels which are analysed in this research. The literature review included in this chapter enables to understand the knowledge gap of the existing studies and helps to understand the research questions. The literature review includes the critical responses about the author, context and methodology. A brief account of metaxology will help to understand the relevance of this study.

13. 2. Chapter Two: Emergent Metaxological Spaces

Jews who migrated into different lands had to adapt themselves to different cultural practices of the area. There were places which welcomed them and there were also places which were

hostile to them. In some situations, they were able to prosper, while in some other locations, they had to struggle. All who migrated to a new land relocated with a new hope. Economic prosperity and the opportunity for the education of their children were their central concerns. In America, many people were able to attain a middle-class life structure and were able to accomplish their education similar to the American citizens. There were forbidden places for Jews in Russia and those who violated the guideline were persecuted. There were also attempts for forced conversion into Christianity. Due to the interaction with a new culture, there were changes in Jewish practices and interpersonal relationships. This chapter analyses the select novels of Malamud to understand how hopeful they were during migration and the change in the cultural practices which affected interpersonal relationships in the light of metaxological spaces.

There was a shift in the understanding of human beings from a rational being to a temporal being. This change began to give importance to the existence of other human beings. If we see ourselves as beings in the world, we can see ourselves only in relation with other (Long 2). In the criticism of Buber against Kierkegaard, Buber says that meeting the other person will evoke a sense of responsibility to others (2). It may go to the extent where the otherness calls for the denial of the self. But in metaxological relationships, the self transcends towards the other and at the same time, it affirms itself. The self moves to the other to understand it and realises that the other is not reducible to the self. Desmond gives importance to the between which is known as the transcending space. It is a transiting and passing space. This space is open towards mediation without reducing the other into the self. Metaxological relationships result in creating a space which is open to everyone and transcending towards the other. This chapter will analyse the relationships represented in the novels from the theoretical framework of metaxology. The main focus of this chapter is to

find out the metaxological space in interpersonal relationships in the novels of Bernard Malamud.

The main focus of the second chapter is to explore the experience of the Jews in the new land. According to Windemuller, America welcomed Jews irrespective of their class, creed and culture. Jews became an integral part of America soon after the Second World War, and there was a tension between their relationship after the birth of Israel (Windemuller 61). There was a serious discussion about anti-Semitism, and an American Jewish Committee was formed to face the issues of Jewish Diaspora. The holocaust experience enabled them to move towards dialogue and brotherhood. Jews are unique in many perspectives, especially in their monotheistic religious belief and diaspora. They have their own identity and contributed to the civilization in the 18th and 19the century (*Encyclopedia Americana* 71). They maintained their emotional relationship to the homeland and established Israel in 1948. The English term 'Jew' is derived from the Greek word 'Ioudaios,' which means the members of the tribe of Judah (71). Even though the Jews were spread throughout the world, they considered themselves as a nation. The consciousness that they are the people of God brought them together. According to *Halakhah,* a Jew is a person who is born to a Jewish mother or converted to Judaism (71).

Around 5.1 million Jews are living in the United States, and they mostly belong to the U.S middle class. They are working as businessmen, professionals, executives, and in the field of art and literature (Bankston 615). The Jews who were settled in Amsterdam faced religious discrimination and life was difficult for them in the early settlement. But they were given the right to practice their religion. Those who were not satisfied with the trade went to other colonies. Jews assimilated American culture through intermarriage and religious conversion (616). Jewish Americans brought their culture, charity, and tradition to the new land. They associated with their community members. Russian Jews began to sail to America

due to anti-Semitism supported by the government. The agenda of Russia was to send away one-third of the Jews from Russia, convert the other one third to Christians and the rest of them to starve to death (617). The existing Jews tried to support them through loans and insurance policies. By 1920, there were around 23 percentage of Jews living in America. By 1924, there was a regulation on immigration.

The anti-Semitic policies made the plight of the Jews worse when Adolf Hitler became the chancellor of Germany in 1933 (618). Many of the European Jews thought that they could survive only if they go to America. The U.S. immigration laws suggested having sufficient resources or families to support them. Austrian Jews had also faced the same problem in 1938 when Germany occupied Austria. Many concentration camps were set up, and they executed the Jews with poisonous gas. The number of people who migrated into America increased between 1946 and 1952 due to the new laws enacted by the U.S. They moved to different places and established synagogues and their schools. The presence of Holocaust survivors made the Jews in America unhappy because they were anxious about such occurrences in the future in America. The Jewish immigrants who suffered holocaust were asked to forget about their past, and urged to form their synagogues and community centres.

Jews were able to maintain a proper relationship with other people in America, and violation against the Jews was very rare. Due to their talents in business, they were welcomed as business partners, and the relationships resulted in mixed marriages (86). The Virginia bill, established in 1785, gave freedom and equality for all irrespective of their religion. There was no religious test to qualify them for any public post. The Jewish population grew gradually and they started participating in social, political, and economic affairs (86). Many German Jews opened shops in America, and the departmental shops were successful. The German Jewish migration strengthened both Traditional as well as Reform Judaism.

Theological Seminary of America and Hillel Foundation supported religious and cultural needs of the Jewish students. The maximum number of Jews migrated to America between 1881 to 1914, and the population of Jews became larger than any other country (87). The number of Jews migrated to the land resulted in the formation of the Jewish Labour Movement. Jews were recruited into the army, and the Russian Revolution brought new hope for a better condition for the Jews in Russia.

The migrated Jews maintained Yiddish as their colloquial language and set up social organisations and Jewish Unions (*Encyclopedia Americana* 87). They developed a rich Yiddish culture through books, theatres, radio stations, and newspapers. The Yiddish language united all Jews irrespective of immigrants' background and culture. There was discrimination against Jewish graduates in the universities in 1920s. Some of them altered their costumes and lifestyle to hide their identities. Jews showed their prominence in many areas. There was a trend against traditional Judaist practices. In 1920s, Jews became prominent in American culture, their number increased, and there were many professionals and students who attended universities. The Great Depression of 1929 made an impact on the lives of Jews since their needs were not taken care of properly. Although the emergence of Nazism made an impact on the life of American Jewry, there were many scientists and academicians during that time. American Jews supported the Jews who were in Nazi-dominated areas (88). They had three main focus during that time namely, to protect Israel, to support Jews in different countries and to flourish in the United States. Keeping these three aims in mind, they founded several organizations. The surveys of 1940s state that Jews became a group of admiration, who were considered as the most disliked group in the earlier years (88). It was the time when the anti-Semitic barriers declined, and Jews became the centre of economic and social growth.

America restricted migration between 1941-1945 due to three reasons, and they were the Great Depression, anti-Semitism, and nativism (Wyman, Medoff 217). Due to the Great Depression, there were anxiety and insecurity, and they were worried that foreigners would snatch away their jobs. Many Americans feared the influence of foreign culture in the United States, and they wanted to reduce it. Many people accepted the common notion that the Jews were an undesirable race. The Immigration Act of 1924 closed the doors of America. However, there was a sympathy existed for Jews in America. America's response to the Holocaust was both a mixture of action and inaction (223).

There was a fourfold increase in the number of population of Jews in America in the Twentieth Century (Goldscheider 57). How to define an American Jew was a question during the twentieth century as to whether it should be based on religion, self-definition, or ethnicity. The internal movement of Jews resulted in the distribution of the number of Jews in different areas. The immigration to the United States beginning from 1870s to 1920s was the demographic foundation of the Jews in America (59). There was a greater receptivity for the migrants in America. The economic opportunities and the financial support of the existing Jewish families enabled them to attain citizens of their new land (59). Migration made them more independent, and they established new forms of family support. The skilled labour and shop keeping ability gave them social mobility (60). They could earn money and attain education for their children. It allowed them to communicate with other Jews in America and strengthened their bond with one another.

The twentieth century is marked by rapid economic and social change, especially for Jews in America. The main source of income of the immigrants was machine operation, craftwork, and shop keeping (Chiswick 62). The immigrant Jews who lived in slums in the 1900s were able to move to upper-middle class suburban areas and became financially secure. The primary concerns of the 1900s were to Americanize the poor immigrants who

were not speaking English. There was upward mobility in occupation from 1910 onwards and many of them were involved in self-employment.

The characters in the novels migrate to a new land with the hope of a better opportunity. Bober comes to America; Levin moves to Cascadia, Yakov Bok travels to Kiev and Lesser stays in the old building with hope though their objectives are different. The desire for a better life emerges from their experiences. Bober suffers from poverty and death of his son; Levin carries a past memories of misery and death of his father and mother, Yakov Bok also faces the similar situation with a life of poverty and death of his parents, and Lesser suffers from loneliness. Material prosperity was not the only concern of the people who migrated to the new land, but they also had social concerns such as a search for acceptance and self-fulfilment. Malamud depicts them as characters in search of belongingness since all the characters go through a sense of loss. The background of the characters clearly shows the hope behind their movement.

The representation of the characters by Malamud affirms that they are in search of freedom. He uses many imageries to show the imprisonment of characters. The family of Bober is imprisoned in the grocery store. There has not been much improvement in the shop for the last twenty-one years. The appearance of the shop and the number of customers remain the same from day one. They are unable to meet their basic needs such as the education of Helen. The only means they consider to move out of this imprisonment is to sell the shop. Levin in *The New Life* is imprisoned by his childhood experiences such as poor living conditions, death of his parents, and a bad name of the family. Yakov was imprisoned in the shtetl due to poverty, and there was no hope for a better life. Lesser also experienced the same situation in the old building where he was staying without any basic facilities and struggling to complete the novel. But the common experience that binds them together is the hope for the future.

Even though the characters in Malamud's novels work towards success, they are not able to achieve it due to their circumstances. Bober in *The Assistant* faces many challenges in his business due to the competition created by the shops nearby. The attempted theft in his shop, the sickness due to his old age, and absence of alternate choice did not allow him to progress in his life. Levin in *The New Life* is in search of true belongingness but is unable to establish a true relationship with others. Yakov Bok tried different ways to sustain in Kiev, but his religious identity led him to solitary confinement. Similarly, Lesser was also trying to complete the novel for the last ten years but was unable to complete it. Each character in the novel of Malamud has his objective to achieve but is unable to accomplish it due to the circumstances around him.

There is a bond among Jews in the novels of Malamud, which is specifically seen in T*he Assistant* and *The Fixer*. *The Assistant* narrates about few Jewish friends of Bober whom he approaches during severe predicaments namely, the owner of the shop where he worked during his difficulty, the shop keeper in the neighbourhood with whom he was planning to have a partnership and the burial committee in which Bober was a member. Similarly, there were few Jews who supported Yakov Bok in his imprisonment since he was a Jew, namely, a fellow prisoner who shared his food packages with Yakov and assured him of his help when he comes out of the prison, and few Jews who were in support of him when he was taken through the street for the trail. These instances are considered as strong bonds as they were able to offer help in situations which could trouble them.

Though they had to go through certain struggles in the new land, there were memories in their lives in which they felt the warmth of acceptance in the new land. Alpine's presence was ignored by many at the beginning of the novel, but later he was accepted as an assistant in the shop. Bober felt the land as welcoming when he came from Russia along with his father. Levin, who came to Cascadia, felt the acceptance in the classroom as well as by the

colleagues. Yakov Bok was welcomed in the new place with an opportunity to work even though he was concealing his identity as a Jew. Lesser accepted Willie in spite of his blackness and the disturbance he caused while he was writing. It is true that their lives were difficult in the new land, yet there are signs of acceptance in Malamud's novels.

The characters in Malamud's novels tried to imitate the culture of the place they were living in. There was a change in the traditional practices of Bober after he reached America. His conviction about the Jewish religion changed, and he thought of following the spirit of the law as much more important than the mere observation of certain customs. Levin also changed himself according to the new situation in Cascadia. Levin learned a new culture such as how to behave in a place, and he also began to imitate what others were practising in the new place. Yakov Bok's attitude towards Jewish religion changed due to his particular living condition. He considered himself as a free thinker and followed what he felt was essential to him. Lesser's concern was not Jewish practices, but he considered his work much more important than his belief in a religion. All these examples show how they were able to adapt themselves according to the new culture.

Malamud brings the concept of the American dream in his novels, where he stresses the freedom of individuals. Bober in *The Assistant* wants to free himself from difficult situations. He considers the grocery store as the reason for his imprisonment. Levin in *The New Life* wants to set himself free from the experience of the past and even wants to bring changes in the curriculum in which some of the concepts are very difficult for people to accept. He liberates himself as well as others from bondage. Yakov Bok considered his life in shtetl as captivity and tried to liberate himself from the captivity by moving to Kiev. But his movement to Kiev did not liberate him since he was imprisoned and never wanted to come out of the cell without a just trial. Lesser was in captivity in the old building, and the only

way to liberate himself was to complete the book which he was writing. This chapter enables us to understand how Jews integrated themselves to the new culture of the land.

The writing of Malamud depicts similarities between his literary creation and the historical context of the novels. The Jews who migrated into a new land with hope faced different challenges in their lives. It gradually led them to internal as well as external conflicts. Internal conflicts emerged when they thought about their past, related it with the future and came to the realisation that they were not able to live up to their expectation. They confronted with external conflicts in the new culture and people. Many of the problems that they faced enabled them to become better people. All these experiences led them to an open space for mediation. It gradually leads them to a new culture and belief system without losing what they considered as necessary. The hope they had in their lives, the conflicts they faced and the changes in their lives enabled them to think about their identity, their relationship with other people, the suffering they went through and finally, affirming themselves. The next chapter will discuss the factors which led them to the metaxological tension and how they established their identity through suffering.

13. 3. Chapter Three: Metaxological Tensions

The experience of displacement led Jews through different experiences which moulded their life. Even though they were accepted in the new land, they also had to go through a painful experience of discrimination. It is essential to understand the tensions they faced and how they established their own identity in the land. Malamud represents the Jews in a foreign land with their cultural and geographical background. The relationship that they had developed in the new land enabled them to affirm their identity and relate with individuals and society. All the characters in the novels of Malamud go through suffering, which becomes a medium to establish their existence. This chapter will analyse the vital textual passages to show how they built their identity and faced significant challenges. It tries to understand the alienation

and suffering faced by Jews due to their geographical and genealogical origin. It portrays how the characters of Malamud go through the process of a metaxological tension between the individuals and the society and how they overcame the barriers they faced during that time. It analyses the magical ability of Jews to transform themselves through suffering. It examines how the community suffers for an individual, and the individual suffers for the community.

This chapter examines the literary representations of interpersonal relationships portrayed by Malamud in the cultural and geographical background. They tried to establish their identity with individuals and the society. The interpersonal relationships they formed enabled them to overcome the problems of their life and develop their identity. The Jewish literary study analyses from a pluralistic perspective since there is no authority to state what is Jewish and what is not Jewish (Kramar 288). The individual identity should be given more importance than the universal concept of Jew (Reich 100). The Jewish identity is constructed based on the genealogical and geographical origin (Malcolm 224).

Malamud narrates Jewish identity and differentiates it from other identities. The identity of Bober is different from the identity of Alpine since he is not a Jew. The difference in identity is the reason for the success of the shop after it is taken over by Alpine (*The Assistant* 77). Patience is one among the excellent qualities attributed to Jews, and Bober has that quality throughout his life (86). Bober is also portrayed as an honest man as he was ready to take responsibility for the shortage of money when he worked as a cashier. He was also not prepared to get the insurance by setting fire to his shop (212). Malamud also attaches their job to Jewish identity since it was painful for Bober to be without a shop (224). Trust is a crucial element which helps to grow in interpersonal relationships. Bober exhibits the quality of trustworthiness in his relationship with family, Alpine, and customers. Bober offers a job to Alpine even though he knows that the income of the shop is not sufficient to support him.

Although Jewish identity is related to the Jewish religion, the intensity of faith differs from one to another. Yakov Bok considers himself as a free thinker even though he is a Jew (*The Fixer* 19). His primary concern is the comfort on the earth, not in paradise. Malamud also brings others' understanding about Jews such as robbers and men with garlic breath (32). Malamud also gives importance to the Jewish community, which supports Jews when they are in problems (280). Gronfein, whom Yakov Bok found in prison offered him help to come out of the prison (198). Even though he was not a practising Jew, it was phylacteries, which gave him consolation when he was in jail (294). Yakov Bok understands Jesus as a strange Jew, but his teachings are ethical. He also narrates how Christians tried to convert the Jews to Christianity when he got the offer to be freed from prison if he turned into a Christian (302). He also could relate himself with prophet Hosea.

Malamud also portrays the Jewish identity in contrast with 'black' identity in *The Tenants.* From the perspective of a 'black Jew', Christians try to convert everyone to their religion (*The Tenants* 43). It is difficult to define Jewish identity in a new culture when people consider a conflict between religious status and cultural identity. The difficult experiences which Jews had gone through moulded their identity in the new land. Russia had a systematic plan to persecute Jews, and they executed it systematically (Grayzel 16). As a result, migration took place in large numbers, and it created a tension between Jews and non-Jews. Due to various factors, Judaism became the most preferred religion in America (Gordon 482). There was also an overlap between Judaism and Jewish ethnicity since Jews brought their religion and their ethnicity to the new land (Philips 65).

Suffering is another quality Malamud attributes to Jews. All characters of Malamud go through suffering from childhood. Suffering leads them to self-fulfilment. Yakov Bok suffers for religious reason even though he is a free thinker. The solitary confinement and the discrimination he suffers in the prison becomes a means for transforming himself. Not only

the Jews but also other characters in Malamud's novel go through suffering. Willie and Mary, who are the 'black' characters in *The Tenants* go through pain. Suffering is one of the dominant themes of *The Assistant,* and the protagonist says, "the world suffers" (7). He considers himself as a person who goes through all kinds of weather without a roof over his head (5). He thinks of the shop as a prison where he spends his whole life.

The question, why people suffer is considered as an essential question that Malamud raises in his novels. Bober says that he suffers because he is a Jew. Yakov Bok finds the answer towards the end of his life that he suffers for his people. According to Bober, a Jew should suffer more to become a prominent Jew. A Jew suffers for the law and the other. Levin in *The New Life* suffers from his childhood, and not because of his reasons. The experience in the campus was similar to a prison. He suffered most because of his memories of the past where he was reminded of his father as a thief and the low income of the family. The thought about the past memories was the reason for his alienation.

The protagonist of *The Fixer* suffers due to his miserable life background and 'barren wife'. But when he tried to move out of it by traveling to Kiev, he landed up in solitary confinement. In addition to the suffering in prison, he also suffered from discrimination in prison. By profession, he is a fixer but is unable to fix his own life (*The Fixer* 132). He was accused of killing a Christin boy, and the investigating officers knew that he was innocent. The existing general notion was that Jews had enmity with Christians and killing Christian children and distributing their blood was a sign of that enmity (166). Malamud also portrays the suffering of Jews in prison with the description that there was a machine which sucked blood especially, made for Jews. He faced discrimination in prison in many ways such as, his head was not shaved off due to which the other prisoners suspected him as a spy, the guards searched him several times a day, he was chained to the wall during the day and locked to the cot at night. He denied the opportunity to be freed from the prison as a pardoned criminal as

the only thing he expected was a fair trial. It was very difficult for him to spend the day without seeing a human face (226).

Lesser in *The Tenants* suffers to complete the novel which he began nine years ago. In order to make the novel the best one, he does not want to leave the place where he started his writing. Levenspiel, the owner of the house, persistently asks him to vacate the building to construct another one. Lesser stays in the building without any basic facilities; there was no water and no toilet facilities. He suffers internally from his bad dreams. He had to work from the beginning when Willie burned the manuscript which was about to be completed. He also suffers when Irene left him without even giving the address to San Francisco. This chapter enables us to understand how the characters of Malamud are in search of identity and how they are able to establish their identity through suffering. Suffering moulds their character and enables them to form an interpersonal relationship.

This chapter enables us to understand how the characters of Malamud go through metaxological tension. The main focus of the migrated Jews was to establish their identity in the new land. Malamud portrays Jewish identity in relation to a different culture. Even though he gives prior importance to humanity in his novels, the characters face difficulty to be humane due to their circumstances. One way or the other, suffering is their experience, and it makes them more sympathetic. The suffering that they go through enables them to understand the reason why they suffer. The proper vision about their pain helps them to understand the suffering of others and helps them to form an interpersonal relationship based on metaxology. They are able to establish an interpersonal relationship with individuals as well as with society. The relationship based on their day to day experience makes it authentic. Next chapter will examine the interpersonal relationship through the framework of metaxology. It helps us to understand how relationships emerge out of communication, and the relationships based on metaxological ethics leads to agapeic love.

13. 4. Chapter Four: Towards Agapeic Love

A search for identity and an attempt to establish authenticity through suffering enable us to examine interpersonal relationships from the context of metaxology. The love towards the other human beings comes as a gift which results in the formation of a community. This love is the building force to do favours to others. One also comes to the understanding that the other is not reducible to the self. Metaxological relationships result in creating a space which is open to everyone and transcending towards the other. This chapter will analyse the relationships represented in the novels from the theoretical frame work of metaxology. It will analyse the essential elements of metaxological relationships such as the role of communication, metaxological ethics, role of aesthetic and agapeic love. This relationship is established through metaxological dialogue which has the ability to understand genuine and fake mindfulness. Affirming oneself and transcending towards the other are the essential qualities of metaxological relationships which is different from any other relationships. One affirms oneself through communication, ethical relationships and aesthetics, and transcends towards the other through agapeic love. Communication, Ethical relationships and aesthetics are considered as means which lead to agapeic love. The interpersonal relationships are analysed within the cultural context.

Communication plays an important role to enter into metaxological relationships. According to Desmond, communication constitutes being of the between and it allows the self and the other to form communities. Communication is essential to every being and one cannot restrict oneself to self-communication. Alpine established metaxological relationship with Bober through communication. The communication between Alpine and Bober made Alpine a responsible person as it enabled them to understand each other. Ida failed to understand Alpine due to lack of communication. The communication between Nat Pearl and Helen was also self-restricted. Lying is considered as a deviation from communication. Bober

communicates his idea of education to Alpine. Alpine understands about Jewish identity through communication. Alpine used communication as a means to attract people to the shop. The more Bober understood Alpine, he became a transformed person.

Malamud brings out different dimensions of interpersonal relationships in the novel *A New Life.* The protagonist of the novel, who looks for a better opportunity in life came to Cascadia with the desire to be a teacher in a college. The appearance of the place impressed him and he got to know many people who worked in the department. He established a good relationship with Gerald and Pauline who picked him up from the railway station and introduced the place to him. This mode of interpersonal relationship moves into metaxological relationship when one gets the confidence of others. Even though the facilities provided attracted him, he felt uneasiness when he came to know that there were no courses in liberal arts. But Levin was ready to work in the college with the confidence he got from Gilley (*A New Life* 37). Although he was disappointed in the beginning, the conversation with Gilley and Pauline gave him the confidence to pursue his desire to be a teacher.

Levin believed that a new place would bring a change in one's life. It was through communication he revealed his past experiences and shared the moments of his self-revelation. The communication with Pauline enabled him to establish a metaxological space in his relationship with Pauline and he revealed that he got the realisation to teach at the age of twenty-six which was a very late insight (18). His thoughts led him to the conviction that what he did for others could be done for himself. This mode of communication enables him to understand himself and shares that conviction with others.

Metaxological relationships take place in two different ways, one to one relationship and relationship of an individual to a community. *A New Life* describes how the relationship takes place between Levin and the students (88). Levin was late for the first class, and he was nervous to address the students. Levin had planned earlier to write down his name and office

number on the board and to welcome the students to the new academic session, but he forgot to implement it as he was tensed. He even dismissed the class much early and came to know that he was not supposed to do so. But when he started teaching, everyone's eyes were fixed on him which inspired him to welcome everyone to Cascadia college (88). These series of events prompt the inhibition to enter into metaxological relationship in ways which lead to such a relationship.

A New Life also states that interpersonal relationships are essential to human beings. Levin was feeling lonely and disappointed after three months in Eastchester. Malamud explains through different characters that it is tough to be in Eastchester for a bachelor (125). Levin was walking through the lonely forest, which increased his loneliness. When he observed, he could see that most of the families were in darkness even at eight, and it was a custom that families used to go to bed early in the rainy season. Levin was yearning for belongingness, which shows the necessity of interpersonal relationships.

Yakov came to Kiev in search of a job and saved Nikolai Maximovitch from an accident. This kind act prompted Nikolai to offer him a job in his flat for forty roubles. The conversation before the job offer enabled them to understand each other, but Yakov was in a dilemma whether to accept the offer or not. He used to change his mind in half an hour (*The Fixer* 49). The situation forced him to accept the offer, and at the same time, he was doubtful if he should work with an anti-Semite. He could not afford to miss the opportunity because it was a large sum of money. He also thought that he was not selling his soul, and that he could move out of that place after completing the work (50). At the same time, he was afraid since he had a pin of ‘Black Hundred’ on his coat. However, the ability to enter into a communication with Nikolai Maximovitch provided him an opportunity to work for him in Kiev.

It is communication which enables Yakov to enter into a relationship with Nikolai Maximovitch, an anti-Semite. When they enter into a dialogue, Yakov communicates his purpose of coming to Kiev for work and if possible, for education (46). Yakov came to know how emotional Nikolai Maximovitch was when he read the Sermon on the Mount. Nikolai Maximovitch introduced himself as a heavy drinker and a miserable man. He drank when he thought about the sorrows of his life. Yakov understood him as a person of emotion since he could not eat for a week when the dog died (47). Nikolai Maximovitch offered Yakov the work to repair and paint his flat nearby for forty roubles out of gratitude. He considered it as valuable since it came out of labour. Yakov was suffering from solitary confinement and he was denied from seeing a human face. He tried to communicate with the nearby prisoners through shouting and banging on the wall. Yakov realised that the greatest desperation was being alone.

Lesser established a relationship with Willie through communication. Even though his presence was seen as a challenge, they entered into conversation. The presence of Willie resulted in tension between them in the beginning due to lack of communication. However, there was a growth in interpersonal relationships and Willie decided to give the manuscript to Lesser for correction. The communication with Lesser brought several changes in Irene. Communication helped Lesser to see things from Willie's point of view. The communication among the characters helps in different ways. It helps to affirm oneself and to know about others and to become a medium of interpersonal relationships.

According to Malamud one can find oneself only in relation to the other. Ethics helps to affirm oneself through self-definition. Desmond states that ethics gives importance to the free expression of the self and it is a means to become ourselves by ourselves and not determined by the other (*Ethics and the Between* 133). The meaning of the freedom is understood only in agapeic community (356).

Malamud's characters show the ethical dimension in the novel *The Assistant.* Morris Bober is going through a sorrowful situation due to poverty. The grocery shop is not profitable, and he even tries to sell it. He was aware of the other kinds of profitable business such as wine and liquor stores. When he was advised by his wife to begin a wine shop, he opined that it was a business for "drunken bums" (*The Assistant* 9). He was not ready to follow what others were doing in the neighbourhood for profit. It shows a metaxological dimension of ethics, which gives him the freedom to express what he believes for the common good.

Treating others with respect is an essential element in interpersonal relationships. Bober was talking about the ways through which grocers used to make a profit in their business. When Alpine asked him why he did not use those techniques to create profit, Bober replied that he did not want to steal from his customers since his customers were not stealing from him (84). Honesty should be maintained in interpersonal relationships so that one need not worry about anything. It should be considered as a precious element in every relationship.

Malamud makes a comparison between the two characters in his novel. The first one is Karp, who had a shoe shop, got the license for a liquor shop, and became very rich (16). He bought a big house for his wife with two car garages. On the other hand, Malamud gives the picture of Bober, the grocer, who worked honestly for many years but remained poor. Malamud uses this description to narrate about Bober, "to cheat would cause an explosion in him" (16). He even trusted the cheaters and became poor. Bober considers having less than what he had at an earlier age as a talent.

The relationship between Levin and Nadalee in *A New Life* did not establish a metaxological relationship since it was not ethical. It was established through dishonest action. If the relationships are not based on trust, empathy, and confidence, they will not last

forever. Malamud's novel *A New Life* which portrays the relationship between Levin and Laverne is an example to show the end of such relationships.

Yakov in *The Fixer* could not establish a metaxological relationship with the workers in the brickyard as he could find a mismatch in the accounts given by Proshko. Yakov voiced against discrimination in prison and refused to come out of the prison as a pardoned criminal even though he got many chances to do so. As he was not ready to accept the crime, he did not make the confession letter as requested by Grubeshov, the investigating officer.

The discussion on the manuscript about the last chapter of Willie's novel reminded him that it was not proper to give a man literary advice (*The Tenants* 126). Lesser came to that conclusion because of a specific reason that he was in love with Willie's girlfriend and the suggestions he gave might appear to be based on how he wanted to exploit that relation (124). Lesser was happy with the first four pages since it was strong, whereas with the other pages, he felt they were poorly written. The problem that he found in the writing was that he was using stream of consciousness and association. It brought him to the decision that it would be a grave mistake if he advised on literary work (126). The proper understanding of the art enabled Lesser to make an appropriate distance from the writing.

Willie wanted to quit his writing as he wanted to help his brothers, who were suffering. Lesser advised him not to give up the writing since it was a way to help his brothers who were suffering (127). There arose a tension between Willie and Lesser when Lesser revealed the fact that he was in love with Irene and wanted to marry her after he completed his book (128). It was really painful for Willie to accept it since he considered that Irene belonged to him. Willie thought of it as the fate of a writer and his book. Once Lesser tried to stop Willie when he was slamming on the wall which resulted in both Lesser and Willie to begin to lock their arms and fight in the room (129). As soon as they saw Levenspiel near the door, Willie ran out of the house after collecting few dresses. Levenspiel

reminded him that he had made a great mistake by bringing a nigger to the house (130). It brought a feeling in Lesser that he was the reason for creating enmity with Willie.

Lesser's relationship with Irene freed him from the loneliness and gave him a sense of freedom in the world (116). Even though he loved to be with Irene, he was thinking about the severe consequences if Willie found it (117). Willie and Irene met very rarely since Willie was working on his last chapter, which was very difficult. The association with Irene hurt him as he thought that she was Willie's girl (118). Lesser thought of informing Willie about his relationship with Irene when he was in a good position to accept the bad news. The thoughts about Irene made him guilty since he always felt that Irene was Willie's girlfriend. It raised an ethical question in him whether he should continue his relationship with Irene.

The analysis of the select novels of Malamud shows that the characters are affirming themselves through communication and ethics. Desmond considers ethics as the free expression of self and it helps one to affirm oneself. Metaxological ethics has to confront multiple considerations and to affirm the expression of the self. The meaning of freedom can be understood only in community. Desmond also considers aesthetics as a means to enter into contact with the other. There are examples in *The Tenants*, where aesthetics becomes a means to enter into interpersonal relationships.

The ability to affirm oneself and move towards the other makes metaxological relationships significant. Communication, Ethics and Aesthetics become means to affirm oneself and move towards the other through agapeic love. One creates knowledge about the other through communication, affirms oneself through free expression and transcends towards the other through agapeic love. The self moves to the other and gets ready to sacrifice oneself for the other. The love towards the other is not based on what one gets from the other but believing in the power of good. The analysis of the characters of the select novels of Malamud shows the possibility of agapeic love. One creates knowledge about the

other through communication, express oneself through ethics and transcend towards the other through agapeic love. Desmond defines agapeic love as sacrificing oneself for the other. He calls it as little death 'the death in knowing the other'. Patient thinking, the ability to give time to things and loving others without expecting something back are the characteristics of agapeic love.

The elements of agapeic love are seen in the protagonist of the novel *The Assistant.* Bober, in his old age, opened the shop early every morning for a single customer and dealt with all the customers patiently. He also trusted the drunk lady. Bober understood the needs of the others and never informed the police even when some people used to steal from him. Alpine saved Bober many times from accidents even though he was sent out of the shop. Alpine presented a gift to Helen and never expected anything back from her. Alpine sacrificed his little savings for Bober's family and even worked in another shop to support Helen's education. The immediate reason for the death of Bober was removing snow from the road for the Christians who were going to the church on Sundays. All these are examples of agapeic love in *The Assistant*.

In *A New Life,* Pauline's father sacrificed his life while attending a patient when he was sick. When Gilley considered Pauline as a burden, Levin accepted her in spite of all her problems. Similarly, Pauline felt empathy towards Levin when he was sick.

Yakov in *The Fixer* rescued Nikolai Maxmovitch from an accident. He also rescued a Jew who was attacked by children. He brought him to his place, cleaned his wounds and offered water to drink. He brought him down in the morning and asked the driver to drop him in Podol. *The Tenants* narrates the agapeic love between Willie and Lesser. When the landowner came to the building, Lesser hid Willie's typewriter in his room and saved him from trouble. Willie also saved Lesser from Sam who wanted to beat Lesser because of his

affection towards Mary. Hence, Lesser was able to forgive Willie for what he had done against him.

The analysis of the novels of Bernard Malamud from a metaxological perspective helps to understand how the characters establish a metaxological relationship. The characters who are analysed in this chapter are able to affirm themselves through communication, establish ethical relationships and transcend towards the other. There is also a visible element of the presence of agapeic love in the characters which is a self-sacrificing love for the other. The metaxological space they established between them enables to transcend towards the other. It keeps a place open towards the other facilitating the meeting of the self and the other. The main characters analysed in this chapter are able to bring a change in the lives of others and at the same time, affirm themselves through dialogue. The next chapter will enable us to understand how this metaxological relationships form a community.

13. 5. Chapter Five: The Community Beyond Metaxological Spaces

The analysis of the metaxological space formed through metaxological tension helps to understand the formation of metaxolgical community rooted in agapeic service. Metaxological relationship begins with self-mediation and goes beyond itself. Being transcends its singularity and comes to the middle to form a community. Metaxolgical community is formed through holism where individuals are dissolved into a network of relations (*Being and the Between* 198). Desmond gives the example of catacombs to explain the formation of a community. There is a unity beyond death and at the same time, there is singularity. The concept of community is self-generated and it gives importance to giving for nothing and common language is not required.

This chapter analyses how metaxological relationships help to form agapeic community resulting in agapeic service. Only a sincere seeker can reach this level of agapeic service. This chapter analyses various factors that lead to agapeic community and agapeic

service. The word ‘metaxu’ means what is beyond itself and what is related to itself. The between is a transcending space which always moves beyond the space and it is a space of movement. Metaxology analyses two different natures of being, such as being in the midst and being as transcendence.

Malamud’s characters have the quality of a seeker since they always seek for a better opportunity and the possibility to establish a relationship. Bober came to America in search of a better opportunity. He tried different ways to make the business a success till the end of his life. Alpine came to America in search of a job and tried many different ways to bring progress in the shop. He also desired for a chance of education. The protagonist of *The New Life*, Levin came to a new place in search of a better future. He was also in search of a good companionship which might bring happiness in his life. Yakov Bok was always in search of a better opportunity in life. He aimed to earn some money in Russia and move to America, where there are places even elder people can study. He was also in search of the meaning of suffering in his life, and he found that he was suffering for his people. There were occasions in the life of Lesser who was searching for inspiration to complete his third novel. He found the inspiration from the picture of Kohn and the broken pieces of mirror.

The Rabbi's sermon during the funeral service of Bober expresses how Bober sacrificed his life for others. Rabbi never had a chance to meet him in his life, but he got to know from the friends and neighbours of Bober how he lived his life being kind to others. Rabbi explains the reason that he got pneumonia from moving the snow so that people could walk in front of his shop. Rabbi also mentioned how he ran without a coat or a hat in the snow behind the Italian lady to return the two nickels which she forgot in the counter. He ran after her to prevent the poor lady from worrying (*The Assistant* 228). Rabbi says that this self-sacrificial love for others could be the reason why Bober had many friends around him.

In the funeral service, the Rabbi affirms that he was a real Jew with a Jewish heart and he lived a life true to his heart.

Yakov got the idea of community while he was suffering. He lost his mother at the early age and his father was shot dead by the guards and when he came to Kiev, he was forced to a terrible confinement. He was treated worse than any other prisoner in the jail. Although he was going through a bitter experience on account of being a Jew, he became a person who represented the Jewish community before the Tsar. He told Tsar that a Jew suffers for no reason and his suffering increased his belongingness towards community. During the conversation with the Tsar, he revealed the fact that he suffered for the Jews saying, "the sufferer for my people" (*The Fixer* 428). When Tsar was sharing his sufferings to express his sympathy explaining that Jews suffered for no reason, Yakov affirmed that he suffered for his people, and he symbolised the Jews. He was going through a solitary confinement which increased his belongingness towards his own community. The miseries that he had gone through in his life as a Jew did not deter him in representing his own people.

Through the description of double marriage, Willie wants to bring revolutionary change in society. The two couples are Lesser and Mary, and Willie and Irene. The marriages are between one Jew and a 'Black woman', and a 'Black man' and a Jew girl. The wedding becomes dramatic when the bridegroom announces that he has not brought the wedding ring and Rabbi permits him to give a coin instead of a wedding ring. Willie is reciting the wedding vows in Hebrew though he does not know the meaning. Rabbi considers this marriage as painful since one of the partners is 'white' and the other is 'black' but they have no choice. Rabbi preaches to them about the need to trust and to be generous in their relationship. The marriage ends with everyone dancing together. Through this double marriage, Willie wants to bring a revolutionary change in society.

Transformation happens in agapeic community where the other becomes a medium through which I become myself. It is a movement to give its own being to the other and for the other. Self goes beyond self-interest and enables to understand even the fault of the other. It involves suffering, desolation, death and despair. Transcendence is a process of becoming and it happens in the middle. Transition happens through thinking and it also involves correcting the errors to move to truth. The concept of wholeness emerges from the double mediation since it is self-mediating and mediating with the other.

Transcending is a movement beyond itself and towards itself, and it is becoming (Being and the Between 406). The agapeic self has a power of generosity, which is the power to give itself for the other. It is a power to give oneself to the other. The agapeic self is offering itself for the other. Desmond states that the existence of human beings is not only for oneself but also for the other. There is no fixed boundary for the self. The self is always in search of the other, or it places itself in the position of the other. The metaxological relationship between the self and other is transcendental, which gives importance to the community. Metaxological ethics asks us to keep our ethos to transcend itself. There are three kinds of transcendence, the first one is transcendence of being as other in exteriority where thinking is not involved. The second one is interior transcendence which gives self-determination and freedom to the individual, and the third one is transcendence as the superior. It is difficult for human beings to remain in agapeic service since the basic tendency is to meet the need of the self. It is possible only when one fulfils oneself and then go beyond the self to reach the other.

The relationship between Bober and Alpine changed the entire character of Alpine. Alpine abandoned the desire for money and became a transformed person. He threw away his gun into the ocean and decided to stop stealing from Bober. Alpine admitted to Bober that he was the one who injured him and later he was transformed. The conversation with Bober

made him a transformed person. Alpine saved Bober from dangers several times. When Bober was sick, he opened the shop, and worked there despite being asked to move out of the shop. When Norwegians opened the shop and attracted customers with different offers, Alpine tried many different methods to lure them back. Alpine decided to collect old Bills from Carl but returned without collecting after seeing the pathetic situation of Carl and his family. He opened the shop at six and closed at ten, and even worked at night in another shop to support the family of Bober.

Suffering in the solitary confinement transformed Yakov. When Raisl, his wife came to meet him, he was unable to forgive her for their poverty, childlessness and for leaving him. She asked pardon for her faults and entreated him to accept the fatherhood of her child. It was a musician who was the biological father, but he could not be the father since he did not act like a father. Yakov agreed to write on the paper that the child belonged to him. Kogen, the guard in the prison, who used to associate his suffering with Yakov, was transformed and tried to protect him. Towards the end, he could understand that he suffered for his own people.

This chapter enables us to understand how the characters of Malamud understand the other which leads to a metaxological relationship and the formation of a community. The relevant textual passages discussed in this chapter analyse how the characters are transcending towards the other. They are able to understand the fault of the other and still be with the other to render agapeic service to the other. The importance of community and the factors which lead to a community are analysed in relation to the novels. Next chapter will bring out the arguments to show that the interpersonal relationships in the novels of Bernard Malamud are metaxological.

13. 6. Chapter Six: Conclusion

Chapter six concludes the arguments of the previous chapters to show the importance of metaxological study in the present context. The primary focus of this chapter is to demonstrate how the self can transcend towards the other and at the same time, affirm itself. Alpine's love towards Bober and his family was a self-sacrificial love but at the same time, he was able to assert himself as a good shop keeper since it was his primary concern to learn the techniques of shop keeping. The new methods that he experimented and the way he interacted with the customers show a change in the personality of Alpine, which is a sign of self-affirmation. The customers were appreciative of the different ways through which he tried to bring progress in the shop.

Alpine's relationship with Bober and his family was metaxological and it led to an agapeic community and an agapeic service. Alpine's relationship with Bober and his family went through a metaxological tension which enabled him to rediscover himself and love others. Alpine was able to understand the depth of his mistakes when Bober forgave him. Bober also became a person who understood others and established his identity. The metaxological relationship established between them enabled them to form an agapeic community resulting in an agapeic service.

Levin in *The New Life* transcends himself from the experience of the past towards a better life. Levin could not establish a metaxological relationship with many of his friends in the campus. Levin's relationship with Pauline went through a metaxological tension and resulted in agapeic love. Levin's love towards Pauline is metaxological since he was able to sacrifice himself for the other and at the same time, established his own identity. He discovered himself as a potential writer and a critic. The relationship he built with Pauline redeemed himself from the memories of the past.

Yakov Bok in *The Fixer* realises the meaning of his suffering when he goes through terrible confinement. He got this realisation towards the end of his life that he was suffering for his people. He affirmed himself as a person who stood for justice in prison. He wanted to be treated equally like other prisoners. He declined the chances to be freed from the jail as a pardoned criminal since he wanted to be known as a pardoned innocent. The suffering he had gone through made him a transformed person and was able to change others through his life. Yakov's conversation with Tsar shows that he was able to affirm himself. He was also able to forgive Raisl and accepted the fatherhood of her child. All these signify that the relationships that he established are metaxological, which is based on agapeic love.

Metaxological aspects of interpersonal relationships are present in *The Tenants.* Harry Lesser considered his work and the place he stayed to complete his work as more important, and he was ready to suffer for it. He remained in the old building without any necessary facilities. The relationship with Willie and Irene transformed his life. The transformation of Lesser following his relationship with Willie is visible at the end of the story when he tries to bring a communal aspect in the context of a wedding. At the end of the story, Irene felt liberated when she decided to change her job and move to a different place. Lesser's relationship with others can be termed as metaxological since he was able to stay in the building with a firm decision to complete his work.

14. A Critical Assessment on Metaxological Ways of Thinking

Desmond's metaxology encompasses an innovative perspective, and his critical thinking reveals that he is a deeply rooted thinker. However, we have every possibility to question every philosophical position as philosophy seeks wisdom. There is no discourse so complete and final, so it is open towards criticism. Desmond affirms that Metaxological ways of thinking indeed contains the truth of being, and it also becomes a sound alternative to other ways of thinking. Desmond's ways of 'metaxu' should not be taken in terms of the

structured, rational scientific system but instead, it is a way of thinking which opens further mediations. Metaxological ways of thinking use the poetical language to explain the truth, and it becomes a limitation since the truth of being remains beyond the words of categorical determinations (V. A. Davis 354). However, we need to ask whether the emphasis on the terms such as agapeic nature, overdetermined, too-muchness and plenitude may not help philosophy in the twenty-first century.

According to Desmond, every being is a gift (Rinaldi 166). There is a possibility to see givenness in terms of passivity. Indeed, the self has to be very active to transcend towards the other through agapeic service. The freedom used by the individuals may become rebellion towards the gift of givenness. Metaxological middle is not something inert and abstract; rather, it is a complex interplay of the self and other. One may also raise the question that in the process of transcending towards others, there may involve both an erotic and agapeic response to the other but Desmond insists only on the agapeic dimension of the absolute.

There are also suggestions which state that Desmond's work evinces several references of critical reading as well as familiar notions of western philosophical traditions. Metaxological sense of being contains a lot of Platonism, Neo-Platonism, Augustinianism in relations to the notions such as 'eros', 'agapeic origin', and the good. One needs to see these as updated versions; even there is repetition, it takes a different sense of meaning. Several terms that might appear to the philosophers that they are too religious, whereas, it might appear to the religious that they are too philosophical. Indeed, there are reasons for saying so, for we come across many familiar terms that have more closeness to theology and religion than the philosophers generally apply. Desmond has introduced these terms to show the familial bond between poetry, myths, and religious dimensions with philosophy and it in no way reduces the credentials of the rational philosophy.

Desmond, as a metaphysician, often overlooks the individuality of being (Hadley 331). Exalting the universal at the cost of the particular results in overlooking the quest to know the things truly (331). According to Hadley Desmond forgets to give importance to the background of the determinate object. “For all that, most metaphysicians think that only by way of universals can individual things be rendered intelligible” (340). The application of metaxology in the novels of Malamud may overlook the individual experiences of the Jews. The various elements of metaxology such as identity, communication and the experience of aesthetic are different for different people according to their contexts and locations. It is essential to understand the context of each experience to understand the characters in Malamud’s novels.

These critical observations have no way to diminish the philosophical interest that the metaxological sense provides. Despite these critical observations, the positivity and the relevance of the metaxological sense of significantly remaining to be rewarding to our contemporary philosophy. It is true that our opening of self-transcendence would not be possible unless we are related to the truth. The metaxological ethos culminates in the community of agapeic service of truth.

15. Findings

This research enables to understand the representation of metaxological relationships in the novels of Bernard Malamud. It focuses on the space between interpersonal relationships, which is a passage. It is a transcending space which moves beyond the self. The understanding of the space between interpersonal relationships takes place in the context of Jewish culture. This study claims that interpersonal relationships attain its fulfilment through metaxological relationships. The interpersonal relationships portrayed in the novels of Bernard Malamud are metaxological which can form an agapeic community resulting in agapeic service. In metaxological relationships, the other becomes a medium through which

one establishes oneself and understand that the other is not reducible to the self. The interpersonal relationships abolish dualism between the self and the other where the self is transcending towards the other as well as affirming itself. The metaxological relationships portrayed in the novels of Bernard Malamud can transform people. This mode of interpersonal relationships is relevant since it enables us to understand many existing problems between people, culture, and nations and find a solution to it.

16. Scope for Further Research

This research aims to explore different forms of relationships in the novels of Bernard Malamud and understand relationships from metaxological perspectives. A researcher can further explore the interpersonal relationships from an aesthetic perspective. According to Desmond, imitation is a means to become the other by maintaining the difference in ourselves. It opens a possibility to examine the literary works to understand how imitation becomes a means to affirm oneself and moves to the other. This research also explores a possibility of deconstructing metaxological perspectives of community. A researcher can also find out examples from the novels of Malamud where interpersonal relationships fail to establish a community. Interrogating the reasons may disprove the concepts proposed by metaxology and suggest possibilities of communities beyond metaxological perspectives. Metaxology can be used to understand and interpret interpersonal relationships in the fictional world as well as in communities.

17. Limitations

This study is proposed from the context of interpersonal relationships; it does not include all fictional works of Bernard Malamud. This research focuses only on the selected novels where there are strong pieces of evidence of interpersonal relationships. This research focuses only

on interpersonal relationships and excludes other concepts. The interpersonal relationships are analysed by giving priority to dialogue, ethics, agapeic love and community.

18. Conclusion

A study about interpersonal relationships is essential even today since it is a part of everyone's life. Since human beings are social beings, it is not possible for us to live in complete isolation from society. The relationship between the individuals and the society is essential, and the quality of those relationship becomes the deciding factor for internal peace of a human being and society. The analysis of these novels is relevant today even though it belongs to the twentieth-century and in the context of Jews who lived in America and Russia since there are occurrences of similar problems even today. It has been a continuous effort to explore different ways to understand and interpret human relations. The question of how to maintain a proper relationship with other human beings by giving equal importance to the individuals who are involved in relation is a prominent question today. The analysis of the novels based on metaxology changes our existing understanding of the interpersonal relationship and gives a new dimension to it.

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